



DRAFT

Berry's Creek Technical Advisory Group Meeting
Minutes
July 31, 1985

The sixth meeting of the Technical Advisory Group took place at the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission's Environmental Center in Lyndhurst. The following people were in attendance: Hank Garie (DEP), Rich Dime (DEP), Joe Maher (DEP), Paul Galluzzi (HMDC), George Harvell (Velsicol), Fred Ziegler (ERM and Morton Thiokol), John Ciancia (EPA), Dr. Jorge Berkowitz (DEP), Larry Schmidt (DEP).

Larry Schmidt introduced Dr. Berkowitz, Chairman of the SAC as a guest of the TAG. Dr. Berkowitz made a few introductory remarks regarding the progress of this project. He indicated his concern on how the TAG is functioning and particularly his impression is that the project is not moving in a positive direction. Since Berry's Creek is the first RI/FS to utilize the "committee approach", it becomes a model for others in similar positions to Velsicol and Morton Thiokol. There are those who are looking closely at this project to determine the effectiveness of the committee concept. Dr. Richard Dime noted the basic purpose of the TAG and the direction that we should be heading. Based on our mandate Larry Schmidt observed that, in his judgement, TAG is becoming a surrogate for the SAC since there is a cross fertilization between SAC and TAG members. SAC meetings seem to be postponed in favor of getting further down the road in terms of TAG's progress. Hank Garie also noted that the project now seems to be managed by TAG.

After the introductory remarks Hank Garie raised several questions regarding the Vicksburg meeting of July 25.* He asked why the meeting was held, what the objectives were, and what was achieved as a result of the meeting. Joe Maher responded by indicating the primary purpose of the meeting was to delineate the research component within the RI/FS for the purpose of clarifying issues necessary to write the RFP. Joe said that there are seven research proposals before the TAG and clarification of the research direction, especially with WES was essential before the RFP could be written. Joe reported that there was a working session with Fred Ziegler on July 9 and 10 to start work on the RFP and the Vicksburg meeting was necessary to develop a final design for the research.



The actual meeting in Vicksburg resulted in a clear indication of interest by WES staff in doing research and also progress in filling the gaps on the research proposals. Joe reported that the meeting did not work out as well as anticipated. The TAG group was not well organized and the WES scientists were not clear on what the TAG hoped to accomplish. At the end of the meeting it was agreed that a letter would be sent to WES by August 2 which would clarify the objectives of the Berry's Creek research and provide TAG comments on the WES proposals. In turn, WES has promised that formal proposals would be prepared within two weeks of receipt.

The discussion then turned to a perception that WES was going to be asked to go beyond applied research and analyze remedial alternatives, and possibly recommend a preferred course of remediation. Fred Ziegler admitted that he had pushed the expanded research concept early in the Vicksburg meeting. However, by the afternoon session Joe Maher seemed to have straightened out the situation. Larry Schmidt noted that the Corps role will be of a regulatory nature and that work beyond applied research could possibly prejudice final decision-making. The group in general agreed that all research will have remedial implications irrespective of how the Corps presents it.

The discussion then turned back to the role of TAG and the need for a timely meeting of SAC. Jorge Berkowitz reinforced that the management decisions will be made by SAC and TAG should simply make recommendations.

Hank Garie reinforced this by stating that TAG must act as the scientists in making recommendations. The discussion centered around the projected costs of the WES research relative to the approved budget. The group agreed that TAG should consider cost but final decision-making and budget adjustments will be the responsibility of SAC.

The TAG then proceeded to enter into a series of technical discussions on the three WES pre-proposals. The technical discussion was lead by Richard Dime and the comments and recommendations of the TAG on these discussion items will be reflected in the letter to WES (Note - when available, a copy of that letter will be appended to these minutes).

During this period of discussion, a fourth WES proposal was submitted and distributed to TAG members (marked item #28). At the end of the discussion on WES research, it was agreed that TAG members would meet with Dr. Dick Lee on August 7 to get further clarification on certain aspects of the proposal. It was also agreed that the response letter to WES would be delayed until after the meeting with Dr. Lee. Since most members of TAG wanted to participate in the meeting, with Dr. Lee, it was decided to continue to an afternoon session on that day and make it a formal meeting of TAG for final review and comment on Task 1 submissions (Volumes 1-3).

The TAG members followed up the discussion on the WES research with a similar discussion on the pre-proposal by Simpson and Good and the possible role of Dr. Bartha in the research. The discussion focused on the potential uptake of mercury into plant materials. Paul Galluzzi was critical of the WES proposals and felt that the research on plant uptake be done on site rather than in a lab. He thought that the need was to measure plant organisms over an entire growing season in an existing marsh to find out what is in the plants and what could be released to the atmosphere. Rich Dime, Fred Ziegler and Hank Garie all agreed that this research question should be addressed. The discussion then turned to the proposal of Simpson and Good. Rich Dime thought the proposal was sound but questioned whether or not they were capable of analyzing for mercury. Hank Garie felt that we should go forward with Simpson and Good's proposal but first meet with them and ask for a full proposal. Hank agreed to write a letter outlining TAG's concerns, issues, scope changes, etc. and then schedule a meeting to discuss those items prior to soliciting a full proposal.

Finally, the TAG members re-entered the discussion on the question of the role of research in the overall RI/FS process. In an informal vote all members present agreed to limit the research work of WES and other scientists to the four basic research questions without expanding to pursue alternative remedial actions as a component of the research scope. Fred Ziegler wished to emphasize that his views on this matter represented his client, Morton Thiokol.

The meeting was adjourned pending the next formal/informal TAG meeting on August 7.